**Billinge Chapel End Parish Council**

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**Billinge Chapel End Parish Council**

**Minutes of the Billinge Chapel End Parish Council full council meeting**

**Held on Monday 15th September 2025 at 7.30pm**

**at The Public Hall, 216 Main Street, Billinge, WN5 7PE.**

Karen Newton - Clerk to the Council

**1.Apologies**Apologies for absence were received from Cllr F. Gill (holiday). It was noted that Cllr Jeremy Barnes would be arriving late. Both were accepted.

**2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**No declarations of interest were made, and no requests for dispensations were received.

**3. Minutes**The minutes of the Full Council Meeting and the Personnel Committee Meeting held on Monday 21st July 2025 were **approved**.

**Proposed by** Cllr Bill Bates and seconded by Cllr Bill Bradbury.

**Resolved**: The minutes were approved as a correct record.

**4. Public Participation**2 residents raised concerns regarding flag flying in Billinge. Discussions were held with individuals both against and in favour.

**Resolved:** It was agreed to reflect the notice from the St Helens website onto the Parish Council website — “Don’t Be Misled. Be Informed. The truth about immigration and asylum seekers” — together with the flag flying protocol.

**5. Billinge Pride Event**

Councillors discussed the possibility of organising a Billinge Pride event, including community involvement (local pubs/businesses), logistics, funding, and next steps. Members were in favour of the event to bring the community together.

**Resolved:** Further discussion will take place at the October meeting.

**6. Aims and Objectives for 2025-26**  
The Parish Council reviewed its aims and objectives for the forthcoming year.

**Resolved:** The matter will be brought back to the October meeting for further consideration, as Cllr Gill was absent.

**7. Planning**

The Council considered the planning applications presented.

**Resolved:** No objections

**8. Policy & Procedure**  
The Council reviewed the Standing Orders and considered an amendment to the section on Public Participation:

“Where many members of the public are in attendance and wish to address the Council on the same subject, they shall be required to appoint one representative to speak on their behalf. The representative shall be permitted to speak for a maximum of five minutes.”

**Resolved:** The amendment was agreed and approved by Cllr Fiona Gill and Cllr Bill Bradbury.

**9. Finance & Governance**

**9.1** **To approve** the Payment Schedule for August 2025.  
**Resolved:** Approved. **Proposed:** Cllr Bill Bradbury / Seconded: Cllr Fiona Gill

**9.2** **To approve** the bank reconciliations for August 2025.  
**Resolved**: Approved. **Proposed:** Cllr Sarah Jennings/ Seconded: Cllr Fiona Gill

**9.3** **To approve** and **authorise** the Payment Schedule for September 2025.  
**Resolved**: Approved. **Proposed:** Cllr Bill Bradbury/ Seconded: Cllr Fiona Gill

**9.4** **To note** the publication of items over £100.00 for August 2025 on the Parish Council website.  
**Resolved:** Noted.

**9.5** **To note** the NJC agreement of a 3.2% pay award effective from 1 April 2025, and to approve implementation for Parish Council staff, including any necessary budget adjustment.  
**Resolved**: Noted and Approved. **Proposed:** Bill Bradbury/ Seconded: Cllr Fiona Gill

**9.6** To consider having one more councillor on the bank account to authorise payments.  
**Resolved:** Approved. Councillor Sarah Jennings to be added as an authorised signatory.

**10. Review and Reinstatement of Reserves**

**Reviewed:** The current level of reserves was considered, with a view to reinstating the General Reserve in line with best practice and allocating additional funds to the Building Reserve.

**Proposal:**

1. That £22,000 (equivalent to 4 months’ expenditure) be transferred into the General Reserve to bring it within the recommended 3–6-month level.
2. That an additional £13,081 be allocated to the Building Reserve, recognising the importance of maintaining and developing community facilities.

**Financial Implications:**  
These transfers will reduce the amount of available underspends/virements for other purposes but will strengthen the council’s overall financial stability.

**Recommendation:**  
That Council:

* Approves the transfer of funds to reinstate the General Reserve within the recommended 3–6 months of expenditure.
* Approves the allocation of additional funds to the Building Reserve.

**Resolved:** Approved. **Proposed** by Cllr Bill Bradbury and seconded by Cllr Sarah Jennings.

**11. Receipt of External Auditor’s Closure Notice**

**11.1 External Auditor’s Report and Certificate (AGAR 2024/25)**  
The Council noted receipt of the External Auditor’s Report and Certificate for the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ending 2024/25.  
**Resolved:** Noted.

**Proposed by** Cllr Bill Bradbury and seconded by Cllr Sarah Jennings.

**11.2 Recommendations Contained Within the Notice**  
The Council considered any recommendations contained within the notice. It was confirmed that all required actions had already been taken in July.  
**Resolved:** Noted.

**Proposed** by Cllr Bill Bradbury and seconded by Cllr Sarah Jennings.

**11.3 Publication of the Notice of Conclusion of Audit**  
The Council approved the publication of the Notice of Conclusion of Audit and the relevant sections of the AGAR on the Council website and noticeboard, as required.  
**Resolved:** Approved.

**Proposed by** Cllr Jeremey Barnes and seconded by Cllr Sarah Jennings.

**12. Public Hall Reading Room**  
Council received an update on the Public Hall Reading Room. Plans have been submitted, and Colin has taken the relevant documentation to the surveyor.

**Recommendation:** That Council approves building-related payments as required, to ensure there are no further delays to the project.

**Resolved:** Approved at the meeting. Proposed by Cllr Bill Bradbury and seconded by Cllr Sarah Jennings.

**13. Children’s Act of Remembrance**  
Council received an update on the progress of the Children’s Act of Remembrance. It was confirmed that a bugler has been booked at a cost of £50, to be paid to Malcolm Webster so that he can make the payment on the day.

**Resolved:** Approved. **Proposed by** Cllr Malcom Webster and seconded by Cllr Bill Bates.

**14. Emergency Gates at Nugent House School – Change of Use**

Council considered the issue of the emergency gates at Nugent House School now being used as an entrance/exit to the car park. Concerns raised by residents included:

* Lack of prior consultation/communication.
* Increased traffic on a narrow road already heavily used by Chapel End School traffic.
* Absence of yellow zig-zag markings or other safety measures.
* Potential risks to child and pedestrian safety.
* Request for clarification from the school/local authority and discussion of possible action to address residents’ concerns.

**Resolved:** Council to continue monitoring the situation and await formal correspondence before considering further action.

**15. Dangerous Parking at London Fields Road / Newton Road Junction**

Council considered correspondence and concerns regarding vehicles parking on double yellow lines at the London Fields Road / Newton Road junction. Safety concerns were raised by residents. Cllr Bill Bates and Cllr Bill Bradbury spoke on the matter.

It was agreed that the Clerk will inform the police of the ongoing issue.

**Resolved:** Action approved.

**16. Reports from Parish Council Representatives**Council received reports from parish council representatives on committees, working groups, and outside bodies. Cllr Bill Bates provided an update on events taking place over the coming months.

**Resolved:** Noted

**17. Reports and Correspondence (Information Only)**Council received a short Police Report and noted other correspondence for information.

**Resolved:** Noted.

**18. Staffing Matters – Confidential/Exempt Items**  
**Part B – Confidential/Exempt Items**

In accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, Council resolved that the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business due to the confidential nature of staffing and legal matters.

**Resolved:** Approved. Proposed by Cllr Malcom Webster and seconded by Cllr Bill Bates.

**18.1 Correspondence Received**  
Council received and noted staffing-related correspondence.  
**Resolved:** Approved as recommended by the Staffing Committee.

**18.2 Employee Contracts and Job Descriptions**  
Council considered the Staffing Committee’s recommendations.  
**Resolved:** Approved as recommended.

**18.3 Salary Adjustments and Payments**  
Council considered the Staffing Committee’s recommendations.  
**Resolved:** Approved as recommended.

**18.4 Merseyside Pension Fund – Individual Enrolment**  
Council considered the Staffing Committee’s recommendations.  
**Resolved:** Approved as recommended.

**19. Date and Time of Next Meetings**Monday 20th October 2025

**Sign: Karen Newton Date 10/09/2025**

Press and public are welcome to attend.